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Agenda item 10

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT ON ITS THIRD SESSION

DRAFT REPORT

Chapter ...

A. Opening and duration of the session

1. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development held its third session at Geneva from 12 to 16 May 1997. The Commission held ..... meetings (1st to .....) and a number of informal meetings.

2. In his introductory statement, the Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD outlined the major global economic and technological changes that were occurring and noted that, while some developing countries were able to reap the benefits arising from those changes, others, especially the least developed countries, lacked the resource base and technological capability necessary to take advantage of the opportunities offered and ran the risk of marginalization or even total exclusion. UNCTAD IX had emphasized the need for mastery of technology in order to achieve sustainable economic progress. Acquiring technological capability, especially in new technologies such as information and communication

technologies, was a *sine qua non* for effective integration into the international economic system and for enhancing competitiveness. While noting the timely decision of the second session of the Commission to focus on information technologies, he emphazised the need to address the challenges that these technologies posed for developing countries and countries in transition. For the United Nations, the critical question was what could be done to facilitate the access of these countries to the new information and communication technologies and to make these technologies contribute to development. Since the mid-1980s, UNCTAD had been playing a considerable role in promoting the diffusion and effective application of information technologies in developing countries and had developed several programmes to ease some of the constraints faced by developing countries and countries in transition in taking advantage of these technologies. It had developed software to improve debt management, as well as to promote trade efficiency through the establishment of Trade Points which provided up-to-date information on global markets and enhanced the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises. When contemplating the key issues in science and technology for the next millennium, it was essential to bear in mind that bridging the gap between those countries which had the capacity to generate and utilize knowledge and those which did not would remain a major challenge for Governments and the international community in the years to come.

3. The Chairman of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development noted that science and technology was a tremendous force for progress, and developing countries placed great hope in science and technology as an ally in their struggle for development. To deal adequately with science and technology, a judicious mix of market and government involvement was necessary. Referring to the work of the Commission, he stressed that it should be a functional advisory board on science and technology matters to United Nations organizations and Governments. This objective was being pursued, and the gap between the Commission's necessary paper work and concrete action in favour of beneficiaries was being bridged. General guidelines worked out by the Commission could be instrumental in working out specific national strategies. During the period 1995-1997, the Commission had undertaken many useful activities, including the work of the Working Group on Information and Communication Technologies for Development and the Advisory Board on Gender Issues and the work carried out jointly with

UNCTAD on science, technology and innovation policy (STIP) reviews, as well as work on a common vision for the future contribution of science and technology to development.

4. The success of this work owed a great deal to the personal involvement and active participation of many members of the Commission and to the effective support of the secretariat, as well as to the financial support received from the regular budget and extrabudgetary sources. He expressed the hope that, beyond the circles of United Nations organizations and Governments, NGOs, academics and the private sector would read the reports and recommendations of the Commission and help public institutions to translate the advice of the Commission into concrete actions. The Commission should continue dealing primarily with generic or intersectoral issues and maintain the high quality of its work. Finally, he paid tribute to the late representative of Burundi to the Commission, Mr. S. Ruzenza, and to his contribution to the work of the Commission.

B. Attendance

5. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 46/235, the Commission is composed of 53 States Members of the United Nations, elected by the Economic and Social Council for a term of four years on the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

6. The session was attended by _____ States members of the Commission. Observers of other States Members of the United Nations and of non-member States and representatives of specialized agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations also attended. A list of participants is given in annex __ to the present report.

[TO BE COMPLETED]

C. Election of officers

7. The Commission at its second session in 1995 had elected, by acclamation, the following officers for its third session:

Chairman:	Mr. J. George Waardenburg (Netherlands)
Vice-Chairmen:	Mr. Arnoldo K. Ventura (Jamaica)
	Mr. Hilal A. Raza (Pakistan)
	Ms. Marina Ranga (Romania)
	Mr. Messanvi Gbeassor (Togo)

D. Agenda

8. At the 1st meeting of its third session, on 12 May 1997, the Commission adopted its provisional agenda for the session, as contained in document E/CN.16/1997/1 (see annex __ to the present report).

E. Organization of work

9. At the same meeting, the Commission also approved the organization of work for the session (see E/CN.16/1997/Add.1).

F. Documentation

10. The documents before the Commission at its third session are listed in annex ___ to the present report.

[TO BE COMPLETED]

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Agenda item 2

SUBSTANTIVE THEME: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

DRAFT REPORT

Rapporteur Ms. Marina RANGA (Romania)

Chapter ...

Chairman's Summary of the discussion

1. The Working Group on Information and Communication Technologies for Development, in its report and recommendations, had focused on the problems of access to and the impacts of these technologies in developing countries and countries in transition. The work of the Working Group had led to the preparation, in addition to its report, of two background documents. The first dealt with scenarios for the development and impact of ICTs on developing countries and countries in transition, and the second was an extensive and in-depth analysis of the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in building innovative knowledge societies; the latter report could serve as a source book for, among others, the national task forces which were recommended by the Working Group.

2. Having considered the arguments and evidence on the pattern of diffusion of ICTs and their impacts on countries, the Working Group had arrived at three basic working assumptions which underlined its recommendations to the Commission. They were that: (1) the potential of ICTs far exceeded their impacts so far, and although, in the short run, the cost of joining the global information infrastructure (GII) might be high, in the long run the cost of not joining was likely to be even higher. There was therefore no alternative for developing countries but to gain access to these technologies and join the emerging GII; (2) there was a need for the active involvement of the private sector in the diffusion of ICTs in developing countries and countries in transition, although in countries where the private sector was still at its early stage of development, public/private sector partnerships might be necessary to prompt access to and effective application of ICTs; and (3) developing countries and countries in transition were at very different starting positions in developing their respective national information infrastructures (NII).

3. The Working Group had proposed four key recommendations and guidelines for developing countries and countries in transition with regard to developing and strengthening their national ICT strategies. These were that: (1) each developing country and country in transition should establish a national ICT strategy, and where such strategies already existed, they should be reviewed to ensure that they took note of the guidelines proposed by the Working Group; (2) action should be taken by national Governments to establish a task force or commission or to ensure that an existing entity was charged with establishing the guidelines for their national ICT strategies; (3) each body of the United Nations system should review the financing, production and use of ICTs for social and economic development in its area of responsibility; and (4) UNCTAD should prepare a study for the next session of the Commission on the implications of new forms of revenue generation, focusing especially on those involving ICTs which might support social and economic development objectives.

4. It was stressed by some members that, while the recommendations and guidelines were pertinent, they lacked the focus and specificity necessary for effective implementation. Some developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, might lack the resources, both financial and technical, to implement effectively the guidelines and recommendations proposed without concerted support from the international community. The financing aspects of

entry into the GII by developing countries and countries in transition should be given serious consideration. In responding to this comment, one member reported that the Commission was preparing three studies on coalition of resources with a focus on ICTs, specifically the financing of the applications of ICTs in three areas, namely transmission infrastructure, education and health. The reports would be finalized and distributed in due course.

5. Several members emphasized the need to consider carefully the wider dissemination of the work of the Working Group and the Commission as a whole. One possible channel for disseminating the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group was via the Internet website. However, since access to the Internet was limited in most developing counties, other more traditional methods of dissemination should be pursued.

6. While the "window of opportunity" opened by the new ICTs was widely acknowledged, the challenges faced by developing countries and countries in transition were numerous, and coping with them would require concerted efforts at the national and international levels. The Working Group had concluded that, to make the most of the opportunities offered, countries needed to develop a national ICT strategy and build local skills, a technological capability and an organizational and institutional capacity. This would require a technology assessment in each country in order to determine its starting position and ICT needs.

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Agenda item 3

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION POLICY REVIEWS

DRAFT REPORT

Rapporteur Ms. Marina RANGA (Romania)

Chapter ...

Chairman's Summary of the discussion

1. The work on science, technology and innovation policy (STIP) reviews received the endorsement and support of the Commission. These reviews were a powerful tool in building up national science and technology capabilities and could help mobilize resources for this purpose. They could also be undertaken at the regional level with a view to addressing the situation of all countries in a region simultaneously, though it was recognized that for follow-up activities national efforts were essential.

2. Several members supported the organization by the Commission of a workshop on STIP reviews and other similar reviews to promote the sharing of experiences among countries at different stages of development and suggested that a monograph could subsequently be published for the benefit of other countries. Based on its discussion of the first STIP review recently completed in Colombia, the Commission discussed the STIP review process and the lessons learned from that experience, including the influence engendered on development and technical change in the country concerned. Similar experiences were presently being undertaken by other multilateral organizations such as OECD, and it might be possible to improve coordination by bringing together those experiences with those of the STIP reviews for consideration at the above-mentioned workshop.

3. The discussion also addressed the issue of technical assistance to member States in the formulation of STI policies through the STIP reviews. Although the STIP reviews needed to be tailored to the needs and characteristics of each participating country, it was stressed by some members that there should nevertheless be some common themes, e.g. (i) a review of STI policy; (ii) the financing of innovation and coalition of resources; and (iii) the role of external resources in endogenous S&T capacity-building aimed at improving coordination of donor contributions.

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Agenda item 4

ACTION ARISING FROM THE SECOND SESSION

DRAFT REPORT

Rapporteur Ms. Marina RANGA (Romania)

Chapter ...

Chairman's summary of the general discussion

1. The Commission evaluated positively the note of the secretariat on the implementation of decisions of its second session. In the course of the discussion, additional information was provided on the issue of implementation of the Commission's decisions by some members of the Commission and representatives of secretariats of some bodies of the United Nations system, particularly in such areas as coalition of resources, poverty alleviation, rural industrialization, strengthening of research and development systems and technological capabilities in developing countries, integrated land management, transfer of environmentally sound technologies and development of energy systems.

The opinion was expressed by one delegation that the abolition of the Senior Advisers on Science and Technology of the Economic Commission for Europe created an additional responsibility for the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. The Commission considered it useful to continue monitoring developments in the area of science and technology.

Scientific and technological aspects of sustainable energy systems

2. The Commission considered the secretariat's note on this topic (E/CN.16/1997/3), which had been prepared at the request of the Commission at its second session. The topic was also discussed under agenda item 8 on future work. During the substantive discussion of the secretariat's note under item 4, a number of general as well as more specific comments were made. In considering energy as a substantive topic, it was vital to take into account a number of pertinent issues such as the uneven distribution of fuel and energy resources, the interactive management of energy, energy savings, the problems relating to biomass sources from contaminated forests and the need for a total energy system, and the special needs of small island countries.

3. More generally, it was noted that energy was an important issue that could not be ignored by the Commission. However, efforts should be made to ensure that duplication was avoided within the United Nations system. The need for coordination of energy-related activities undertaken by United Nations bodies and organizations was vital.

The budget and inter-sessional activities of the Commission

4. The Commission expressed appreciation for the contributions of the Bureau, experts and the secretariat to the intersessional work of the Commission. It also expressed its appreciation to Governments and organizations which had contributed financial resources to support the Commission's style of work, involving the setting-up of panels and working groups to deal with specific issues identified for further consideration.

5. Some members stressed that a provisional work programme and budget should be circulated to members of the Commission at the beginning of the new inter-sessional period and that, for the purposes of transparency, the secretariat should continue to provide progress reports on both the work programme and its financial aspects at six-month intervals. The provisional agenda for the fourth session of the Commission should also reflect the members' wish that an item dealing with the budget be included.

6. Members of the Commission also emphasized the need to make use of the competences available within the secretariat, whenever possible.

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Agenda item 5

CONSIDERATION OF WAYS AND MEANS OF COMMEMORATING IN 1999 THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIENNA CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND THE VISION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ROLE IN THE AREA OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

DRAFT REPORT

Rapporteur Ms. Marina RANGA (Romania)

Chapter ...

Chairman's summary of the discussion

1. In addition to the note by the secretariat on this agenda item (E/CN.16/1997/7), the documentation included a report of the Commission's panel of experts outlining specific areas which could be dealt with by small expert group meetings as a basis for developing a "common vision" (E/CN.16/1997/CRP.2), as well as another document containing a summary of the discussions held at a workshop in Jamaica (E/CN.16/1997/Misc.1).

GE.97-50936

2. The Commission expressed its appreciation for the secretariat note, and suggestions were made concerning additional elements to be taken into account for the elaboration of a common vision. These included consideration of the evolution from a state-led to a science-led system, and the involvement of civil society and stakeholders including Governments, enterprises, academia and NGOs, as well as individual citizens, in the process of formulating a common vision for the future contribution of science and technology to development. Science and technology were to be seen as incorporating not only natural and physical sciences, but social sciences as well. The process for elaborating a common vision, as outlined in document E/CN.16/1997/CRP.2, should be anchored in effective international cooperation, with a recognized role and responsibility for the United Nations system, it should bridge conceptual and practical issues, and it should combine both global and regional dimensions. It should also cover such concerns as the development of South-South cooperation, the integration of LDCs and economies in transition into the world economy, the transfer of technological capabilities to developing countries, and the preservation and development of the scientific and technological potential of countries in transition. This process should be linked to the follow-up work to the Rio Conference and Agenda 21.

3. With regard to further modalities for the elaboration of the vision, in particular in the context of the twentieth anniversary of the Vienna Conference, diverse proposals were presented. These included the discussion of a common vision at a global level, with different variations such as the holding of a special session of the General Assembly or the preparation of a special high-level meeting at the fourth session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. The holding of regional events such as science and technology exhibitions was also suggested, along with the preparation of a video film on science and technology in relation to development, highlighting both positive and negative aspects. In the course of this discussion, the representative of UNESCO officially invited the Commission and the secretariat to participate in the preparations for the World Science Conference, to be held in 1999.

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ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION REGARDING THE COORDINATION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

DRAFT REPORT

Rapporteur Ms. Marina RANGA (Romania)

Chapter ...

Chairman's summary of the discussion

1. The Commission considered the note prepared by the secretariat at the request of the Commission at its second session (E/CN.16/1997/2). It was noted that, with the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, which had brought the Commission to Geneva and had also made UNCTAD the secretariat of the Commission, the mandate for the coordination of the activities of United Nations agencies in the area of science and technology was vested in the United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. Furthermore, the functions of the former Inter-Agency Committee on Science and Technology for Development had been assumed by the

existing coordinating bodies under the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). The Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) and the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (ACSD) were the two bodies which dealt with issues related to inter-agency coordination in the field of science and technology for development. In this regard, a close working relationship had been established between the secretariats of CSTD and CSD.

2. It was pointed out that requesting United Nations organizations to contribute to the preparation of reports fell short of the requirements of active collaboration and coordination. In pursuing its coordinating responsibilities, the Commission should involve United Nations organizations in the conceptualization and planning of its intersessional work and the implementation of its recommendations, to the extent that financial resources were available for that purpose.

3. It was also suggested that the use of information technology such as video-conferencing could provide a possible channel for facilitating close communication and cooperation among the organizations of the United Nations system.

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Agenda item 7

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND OTHER OFFICERS FOR THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

Draft decision submitted by the Chairman of the Commission on the basis of informal consultations

Election of the members of the Bureau other than the Chairman

The Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) recommends to the Economic and Social Council that an organizational meeting of the CSTD for a duration of half-a-day, within existing resources, be held as early as possible in January 1998 in Geneva or in New York, for the sole purpose of electing the members of the Bureau, other than the Chairman, and to be attended by representatives of permanent missions in either venue. The Commission also recommends to the Economic and Social Council that current members of the Bureau stay in office until 31 December 1997.

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SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION POLICY REVIEWS

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ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION REGARDING THE COORDINATION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

OTHER MATTERS

Draft resolution submitted by the Chairman of the Third Session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development

GE.97-51045

Draft resolution submitted by the Chairman of the Commission on the basis of informal consultations

Science and technology for development

The Economic and Social Council

Recognizing the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) as a forum for the examination of science and technology questions, for improving understanding of science and technology policies for development and for the formulation of recommendations and guidelines on science and technology matters within the United Nations system, all in relation to development,

Recognizing further that the Commission, in carrying out its work, should pay special attention to the needs and requirements of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and land-locked and small island developing States, and that it should also take into consideration the relevant problems of countries with economies in transition,

Taking note with appreciation of the report prepared by the Working Group on Information and Communication Technologies for Development [1] of the Commission, and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

Recognizing that the social and economic potential of information and communication technologies is enormous, and that the risks for those without the capabilities to access, design, produce and use the new products and service applications may lead to their marginalization from active participation in the global economy,

Noting with satisfaction the report on the scientific and technological aspects of sustainable energy systems, [2]

Noting with satisfaction the report by the Gender Advisory Board on its work, as summarized in document E/CN.16/1997/8, paras. 19-22,

Noting with satisfaction that the science, technology and innovation policy (STIP) reviews directed at a broad spectrum of sectors, including industry, social sectors and government itself, have started, that one review has already been completed, that another is under way and that a third is awaiting financing,

Noting also the other relevant documentation submitted to CSTD for consideration at its third session, [3] [4]

Noting further that the fourth session of the Commission is scheduled to take place 20 years after the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development held in Vienna, and further recognizing that there is a need to define a new vision and to enhance continuously the role for the United Nations system in the area of science and technology for development,

Recalling the decision on its working methods taken by the Commission on Science and Technology for Development at its second session and ratified by

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[1] E/CN.16/1997/4.

[2] E/CN.16/1997/CRP.1

[3] E/CN.16/1997/2, 3, 5 - 7

[4] E/CN.16/1997/CRP 1 - 6

the Economic and Social Council, [5]

Recognizing that enhanced transparency and accountability are essential for the efficient and effective functioning of the Commission,

Welcoming the UNESCO initiative in holding a World Science Conference in 1999 to strengthen the commitment of countries to scientific research and development in the service of societal progress,

Activities as follow-up to the earlier work of the Commission

Information and communication technologies (ICT) for development

1. Recommends that each developing country and country in transition establish a national ICT strategy taking into account, *inter alia*, the guidelines proposed by the CSTD Working Group on Information and Communication Technologies for Development; where such strategies already exist, they could be reviewed in the light of these guidelines;

2. Recommends that action be taken by national Governments to establish a task force or commission or to ensure that an existing entity be charged with the design of the national ICT strategy;

3. Invites countries, in order to facilitate the exchange of experiences among them at the international and regional levels, to prepare a report on their ICT strategies for the next session of the Commission in 1999; this report should include the priorities of each national ICT strategy, the mechanisms for updating, and the procedures for implementing the strategy; to enhance the value of the reports, consideration might be given to the organization of workshops, all of these to be financed from extra-budgetary resources;

4. Invites relevant bodies of the United Nations system to assess their capability to provide assistance and promote cooperation in the ICT area and to suggest areas in which they are best able to assist developing countries and countries in transition in the design and implementation of their national ICT strategies;

5. Requests the secretariat of the Commission to synthesize the results of these assessments and, within existing resources, to hold an inter-agency meeting in cooperation with the Commission to review this synthesis;

6. Invites Governments, the public and business sectors, academia and NGOs in industrialized countries to engage in technological cooperation activities with counterparts in developing countries and countries in transition in order to facilitate their access, encourage the use, production and development of ICTs and to ensure their effective participation in building the GII;

7. Requests the CSTD to identify an independent institute to prepare a study for the next session of the Commission on new forms of resource generation, involving ICTs, which may support social and economic development priorities;

STIP reviews

8. Decides that the Commission organize a workshop comparing the experiences in STIP or STIP-like reviews in developing countries and countries in transition, in order to stimulate a learning process in these innovative

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[5] ECOSOC decision 2/101: Working methods of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. ECOSOC regular session, July 1995.

efforts, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources;

9. Recommends the continuation of cooperation between the Commission and UNCTAD on the STIP reviews;

Common vision of the future of science and technology for development

10. Recommends that the Commission, in the form of expert group meetings, carry out a programme of preparation as outlined in the report of the meeting of the preparatory working group for this subject, held on 20-21 December 1996 in Geneva, taking into account regional inputs;

Gender Advisory Board

11. Requests the Gender Advisory Board to continue its work as reported, in collaboration with all relevant organizations, in particular those within the United Nations system;

New substantive theme and other activities

12. Decides that the substantive theme for the inter-sessional period 1997-1999 will be "Science and technology partnerships and networking for national capacity-building". This will include North-South as well as South-South partnerships and networks involving, *inter alia*, enterprises, educational bodies, research institutions, governmental science and technology departments and other actors in the field of science and technology,with particular attention to be paid to biotechnology and energy;

13. Decides further to hold a panel meeting on biotechnology and its impact on development, bringing together country experts and those from relevant institutions and United Nations agencies working on this subject, in order to identify critical issues relevant to development not sufficiently covered by existing fora, with particular attention to food production, and recommend how further work on these issues might be undertaken;

Budget and inter-sessional activities

14. Recommends that in any future sessions of the Commission the report on the budget and inter-sessional activities of the Commission be considered under a separate agenda item;

Coordination of science and technology for development in the United Nations system

15. Decides that the CSTD secretariat be requested to study the possibility of setting up, in collaboration with other United Nations bodies, including regional commissions, an electronic network on their activities in science and technology for development, making this network widely accessible to science and technology institutes around the world;

16. Further decides that, in order to promote better interaction with United Nations bodies, especially the regional commissions, the CSTD give consideration to including suitably qualified members of these bodies in the working groups of the Commission; in addition, meetings of the CSTD working groups might be held in the offices of the regional commissions whenever possible;

Coalition of resources

17. Recommends that a workshop be convened by the Commission to provide a forum for coalition of resources, particularly in relation to ICTs.

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SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION POLICY REVIEWS

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ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION REGARDING THE COORDINATION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

OTHER MATTERS

Draft resolution submitted by the Chairman of the third session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development

Corrigendum

Footnote 5

For ECOSOC decision 2/101 read CSTD decision 2/101

For ECOSOC regular session, July 1995. read CSTD second session, May 1995.

GE.97-51061